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VOLUME XXIII - NUMBER 2 - NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2004



# TORQUE TUBE

THE INTERNATIONAL NEWS PUBLICATION  
FOR MEMBERS OF THE 1937-1938 BUICK CLUB

CLUB

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HAPPY HOLIDAYS

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## TORQUE TUBE



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# 9TH CYLINDER

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**1937 - 1938 BUICK CLUB  
2005 CALENDAR**

I would like to announce the new 2005 club calendar. Thank you for all your submissions. The winner of our photo contest was Jerry Barton (#281). Jerry's picture is on the cover and he will get a free one-year subscription to the Torque Tube. If you would like to buy the calendar you can go to [www.torquetube.com](http://www.torquetube.com) and order it online. Or you can send me \$19.99 plus 15% for shipping and handling and I will send it to you. Jerry is located in the Washington state and he is asking if somebody could step up and support a western 1937-38 Buick meet in the California or Oregon areas. Lauren Matley (#46) and Jerry are sponsoring one in the Seattle area in 2006, but he feels more activities could be held in the West.

Now I would like to announce the 1937-38 license plate badges. They are \$19.95, including shipping, and you can send your checks to Plates Mate Co., Box 91, Middleboro, MA 02346. Please allow 2 to 3 weeks for delivery. See the advertisement on page 11.





It was a long time in coming but Dug Waggoner (#10) presented a "Torque Tube" award to Harry Logan (#651) for his ten years as editor. Dug had the plaque made by Dave Tacheny's (#997) wife Randi. Thank you again, Harry, for your dedication to the club.

I found a fantastic plastic maker here in California. I would like to produce excellent reproductions of the map light covers. I personally have not seen a good reproduction, but I feel that this plastic maker will make very good ones. What I need are perfect originals to make the molds. Please call

me if you have a perfect or close to perfect map light cover and you would be willing to loan it to me for a while in order to create the mold. 415-203-4180.

Recently there has been a big drop off in story submissions by members. If you have any stories or ideas for stories, please send them in; we would really appreciate your submissions. The *Torque Tube* can't drive without *you!*

Happy holidays and merry motoring,

*Mark*



Check Those

## TECHNICAL TIPS

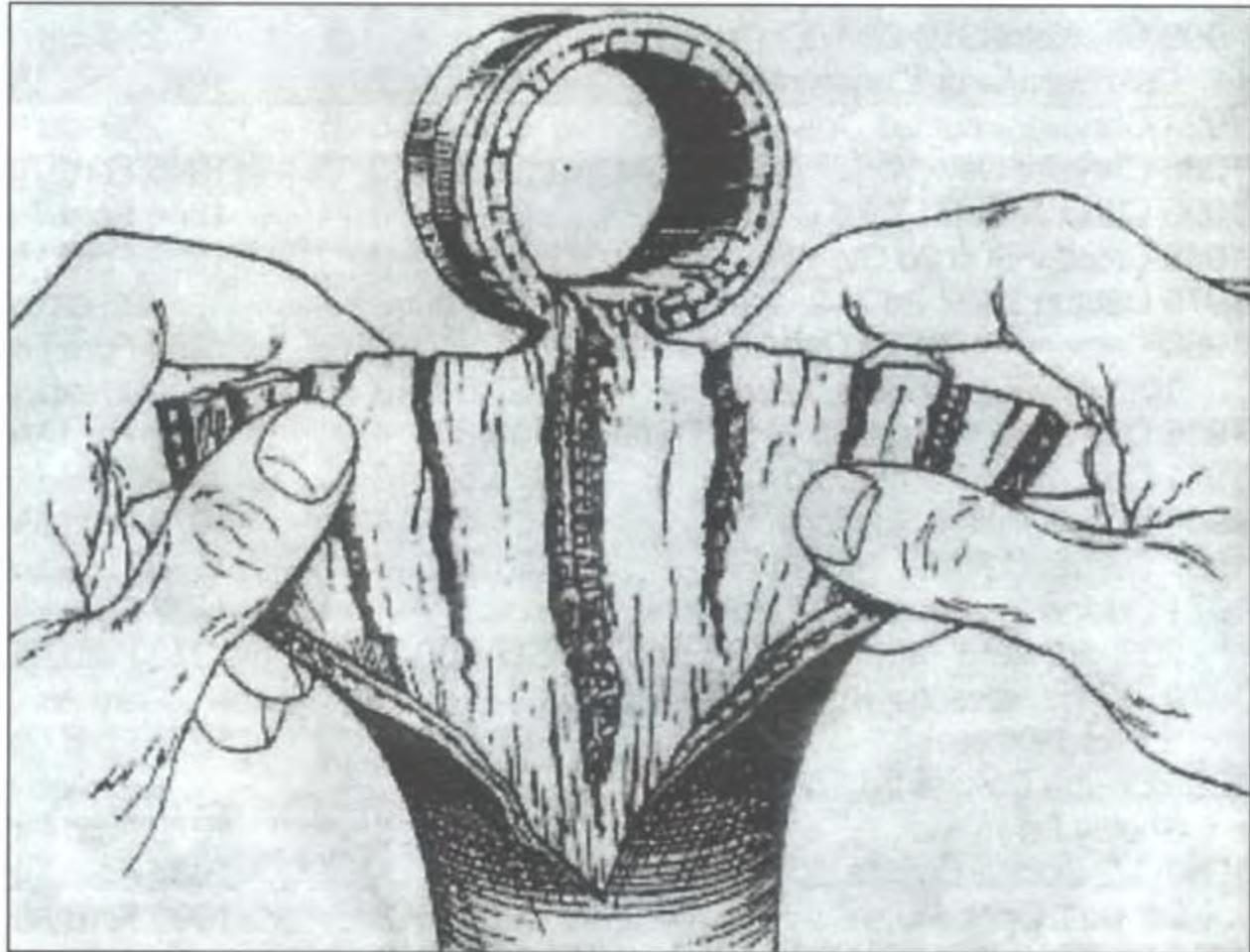
### RADIATOR & HEATER HOSES

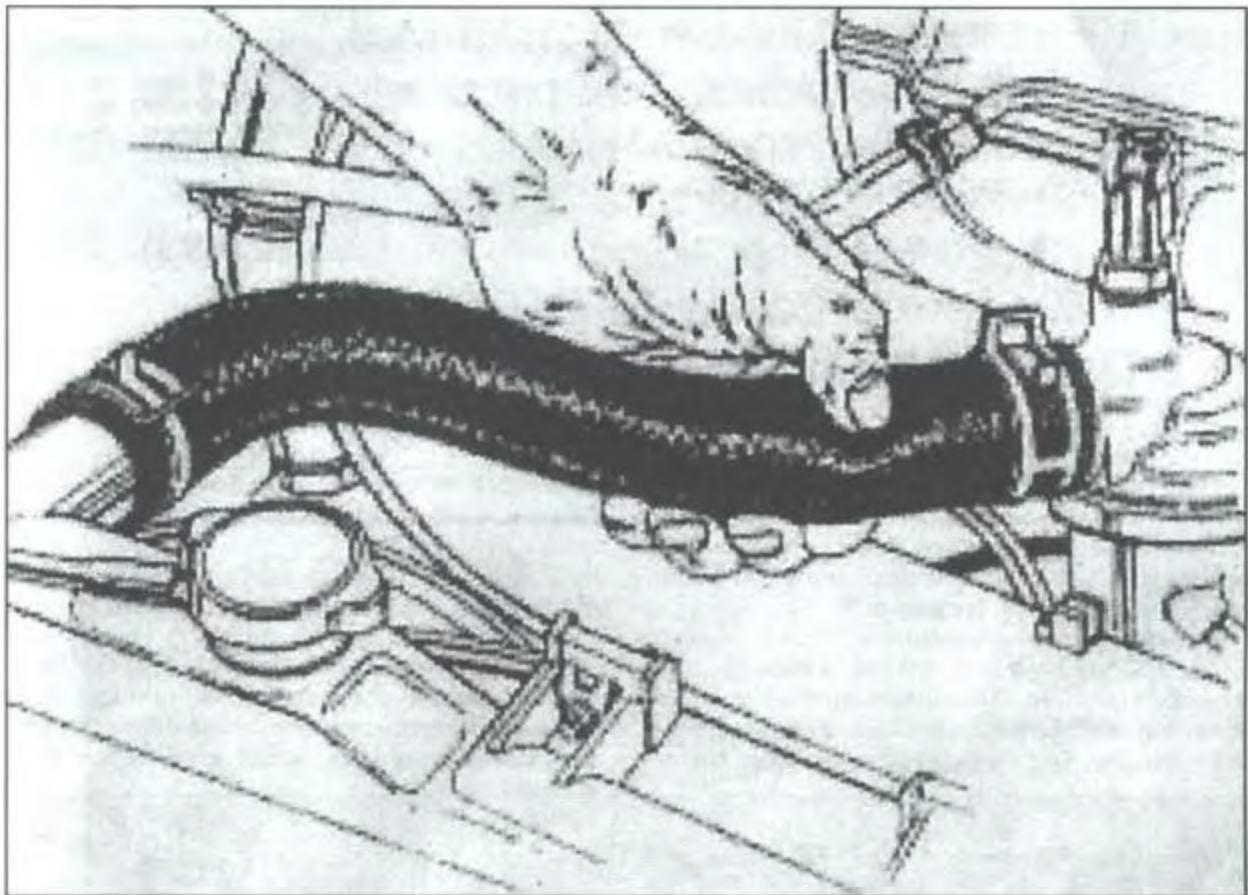
I recently had a heater hose burst on my seldom-driven, 25-year-old car. The hoses all looked great from the outside, but one failed even though I had driven only a few miles and the engine had barely reached operating temperature. The problem was electrochemical degradation (ECD), which causes the cooling system to act like a battery.

The active metal in the aluminum alloy thermostat housing and radiator are the negative electrodes or anodes. The coolant, with its ionic corro-

sion inhibitors, is the electrolyte. The hoses that contain coolant and oxygen serve as positive electrodes or cathodes.

The battery-like reaction produces an electrical charge that leads to the striations within the tube wall. These fine cracks extend from the inside to the outside near one or both ends of the hose. The coolant seeps through these cracks, attacking those reinforcements as it wicks along the length of the hose. The cracks, accelerated by the high tem-





peratures, flexing, and vibration, grow larger and deeper. Eventually, the hose springs a leak or ruptures under normal pressure.

Engineers at the Gates Rubber Company, who first discovered and diagnosed the problem in the mid-1980s, estimate that 95 percent of coolant hose failures are caused by ECD. Failures most often occur in upper radiator, bypass, and heater hoses—the ones most likely to contain air when the vehicle is not running. Like rust and metal corrosion, ECD continues to destroy hoses even when the engine is off and the vehicle is in storage.

A hose may look almost new, but since it goes bad from the inside out, appearance alone is not an indicator of when a hose is about to fail. However, you can feel the effects of ECD by squeezing the hose near the clamps. Failure normally occurs within two inches of the hose ends, not in the middle.

Perform the test when the engine is cool. Use fingers and thumb, not the whole hand, to check for weakness. Check for any difference in feel between the middle and the ends of the hose. If the ends feel mushy, the hose should be replaced immediately. Make sure to inspect heater, plus other small hoses, since the smaller the dimensions of the hose, the faster ECD damage can occur.

The Gates Company's research shows that hose degradation occurs in most vehicles with as few as 25,000 miles worth of use on the coolant hoses. Stop-and-go driving—or extended idling—can accelerate the problem. The solution is to replace hoses, even ones that look good, more frequently. Never let them go longer than four years.

You can remove hoses and inspect them internally, but it is better to replace them, since by removing the hoses you have already done the hardest part of the task.

Electrochemically resistant (ECR) hoses are now available. For instance, Gates offers hoses made of an EPDM formulation that resist the destructive effects of ECD. The ECR hoses have gone 200,000 miles or more with no damage. Additionally, the Gates ECR hose inhibits coolant from permeating through the hose walls, which results in water loss and an imbalance of antifreeze. (Too much antifreeze can be as detrimental as too little where the boiling and freezing points are concerned.)

Finally, replace clamps when replacing hoses. Although today's clamps are usually made of stainless steel to resist corrosion and damage, they still use carbon steel screws, which can fatigue and lose strength.

# THE WOOD GRAiNER

By Giancarlo Davis (#1748)

All classic Buick owners know that there is much more than meets the eyes of awestruck admirers gaze upon their prized automotive possessions. They know that it's not just the polished exterior and raw, pulsating power of their straight-8 engine that transforms a drab daily driver into an exotic example of Deco-era art. Much of the artistic beauty dwells within the coach, in the paneling behind the steering wheel and between the windows. It's in something that looks like wood and feels like plastic. The art is called wood-graining, a twentieth-century art form that makes plastic resemble fine wood, and helps craftsmen like Oakland resident Craig Clemens give old cars a rare beauty, a sense of refinement, and, perhaps subtly, gives these cars a feeling of being a work of art on wheels.

Clemens was already somewhat of a hardened

Photos by Mark Jordan (#1297)

veteran in the wood-graining business when he began his career as a classic car wood-grainer. He dabbled a bit in furniture wood-graining after getting out of the Navy in 1959. "I was helping my dad out then, and he had a body shop before that. So I kinda grew up with that business. Then I attended art school for about six years. When I came out, I did color and design. But that didn't pay enough, so I went back into furniture. I had that going the whole time anyway. In 1982 I didn't do any more furniture, so the wood-graining took over. My touch-up kit burned down in someone else's furniture warehouse. So I said to myself 'that's good...I'm out.' So then I started doing the wood in station wagons too, here, in Oakland. Had a shop in Fremont for a couple of years. I've been here for over twenty years. My first job was back in '63 on a pair of wooden bows that were all butch-



Craig Clemens works on the window frame of a 1938 Buick Limited that belongs to one of our members Bill Boyce (#1608).

Craig holds up Bill's dash after it had been primed to be painted.



ered. But that was more of a glaze. That's how I got into making non-wooden items look wooden."

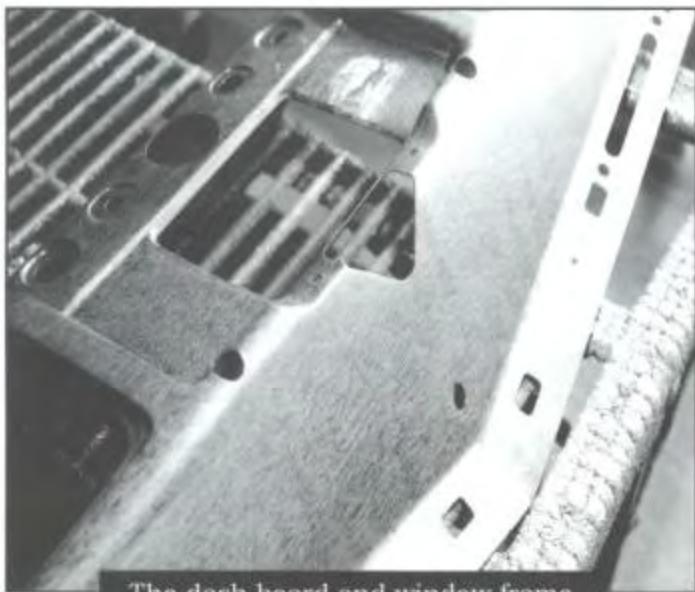
Clemens then started to work on cars, when restoration fanatics started looking for specialized artists (like wood-grainers) to touch up and restore faded, chipped and otherwise damaged parts. He was almost bullied into his first car restoration job in 1967, and it was then interest in automotive wood-graining soared and business took off. "I did my first interior of a car, a 1937 Ford. My friend pretty much said "do it!" and I did it, and it came out pretty good! And then I started realizing how much I enjoyed doing it. In the same year I started doing that out of my house in San Leandro. That lasted until 1976. Then I had to go out and get a real shop. I was still doing furniture (restoring car

parts and furniture somehow all fits together), but I really felt I needed to concentrate on one thing. So I dropped the furniture altogether and concentrated just on doing cars."

Automotive wood-graining was originally done as a lithograph, also called dye-knot process, a process where a photographic decal is rolled onto an image. Then a base coat is applied for the background color. "The color could be a reddish, mahogany, or light brown," says Clemens. "And then right on top of that they put the print on with rollers. They leave the image, set from a zinc plate, all inked up, like printing a newspaper. Then they put little dots in them to get real close. And then they clear-coated it, and toned, it too. Sometimes you'll see some original dashes where they missed a spot and then they mooshed it in with a brush. A lot of that was done by a different by hand, like the Oxford Wood-graining Company. Some dashboards are printed then stamped out later. The image is printed on a flat piece of steel to give it that metallic look. The window frames are cut with more of a solid look to it. They're painted and wood grained, right on top of metal, then stamped with a felt stamp. You can have a grey background like a lot of the Art Deco Cars did and then have the wood-grain on top of that."

Although a handful of the old low-production cars were wood-grained by hand, the majority of the wood-graining was done by high-production machines to save time and save manpower. Unfortunately, some of the finished product lacked the same kind of lustre and beauty of those done by hand. Clemens'

own process is quite similar to the hand-painted jobs of yore. "It definitely does not look like one of those machine jobs," states Clemens. "I create a curlier grain, and I have to do it in three or four steps. I'll grain it, clear-coat it, and it gets a layering effect, where with every coat it gets darker. It's tricky. So you have to sometimes start out lighter with the base color. I find that a lot more liberating in a way. You have to familiarize yourself with the nature, feel and flow of different kinds of wood. In the end, it should look like the real thing! The color, depth, detail, everything should look better than they were originally, in the finish and everything. Back then they just used two coats of clear enamel. Now I got seven or eight coats of gloss, or black, and people want them shiny like a mirror. I



The dash board and window frame after the grain has been painted on.

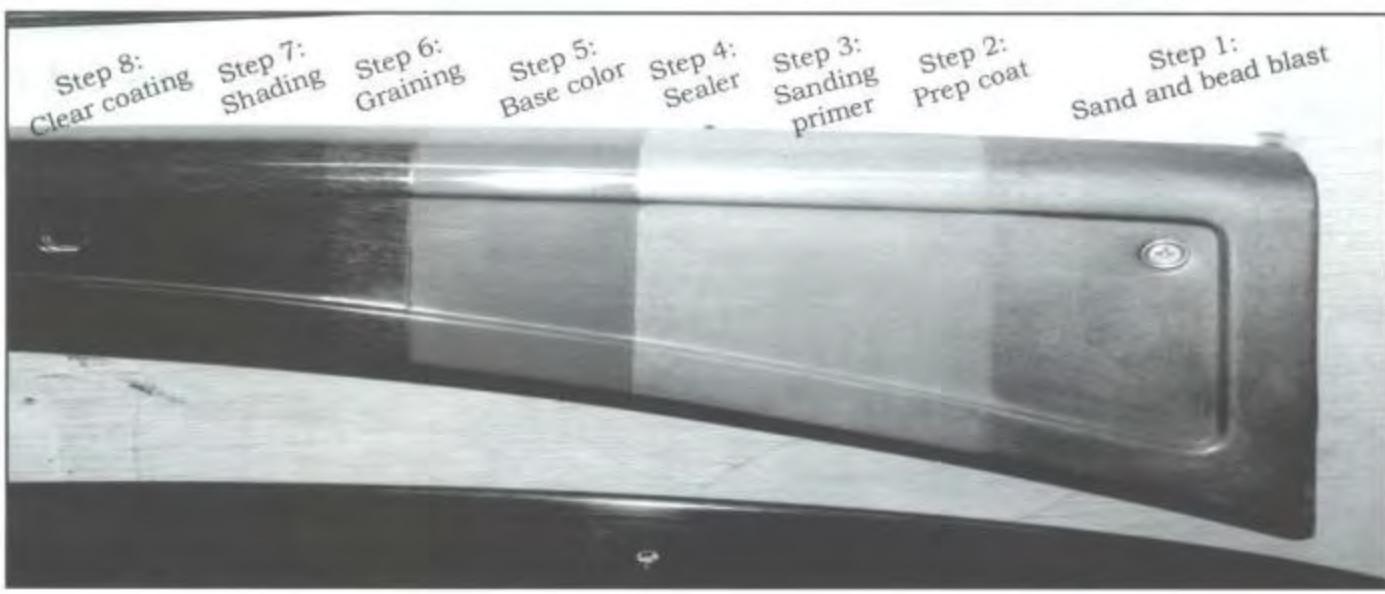


don't like it. I like a softer look to the wood, like high satin."

Typically, people expect one result and get something else: something that might be a few shades off the original wood-graining in the car. Clemens paints by hand, and, like every other artist, colors each piece that comes in with the pigment of his own personality. "People typically want something as glossy as, as light as, or as dark as, or colored like the original. But since my process is different, and I have more style than what the machines did back in the day, the final product will look different. I try to do my best though, and I've rarely heard anyone complain with what they get!"

Which leads us to ask what exactly is the wood-graining process, from start to finish. "People out of town take the pieces out of the car. Some dashboards are welded in the car, touch them up a little bit. I typically don't want the car here, in case I spill stain on the upholstery. And there are no disclaimers, but I do cover everything in plastic. Then you bead-blast the pieces, which is similar to sandblasting cleans metal with glass beads, making it less severe. Then I add a primer (for a background color), and then a sealer, which mixes all the primer paint together. Then I start with basic color coating, then grain it, dabbing the wood here and there with paint. Then I touch it up by hand. Then I add about four coats of clear-coat. Then I shade it, and then put three more coats of clear-coat on top of that. It's pretty straightforward, really. No magic involved."

The whole process takes about two months, from start to finish, depending on weather conditions. "During winter time, the weather makes it tough to spray as much. So I'm backed up in the winter. If I take it to the bead-blasters, that alone will take me a week. And too much moisture (on the days it rains) on the clear-coat can turn the



Craig used this small section left of the original wood-grain, that was behind the radio, to create the wood-graining pattern.

Original wood grain

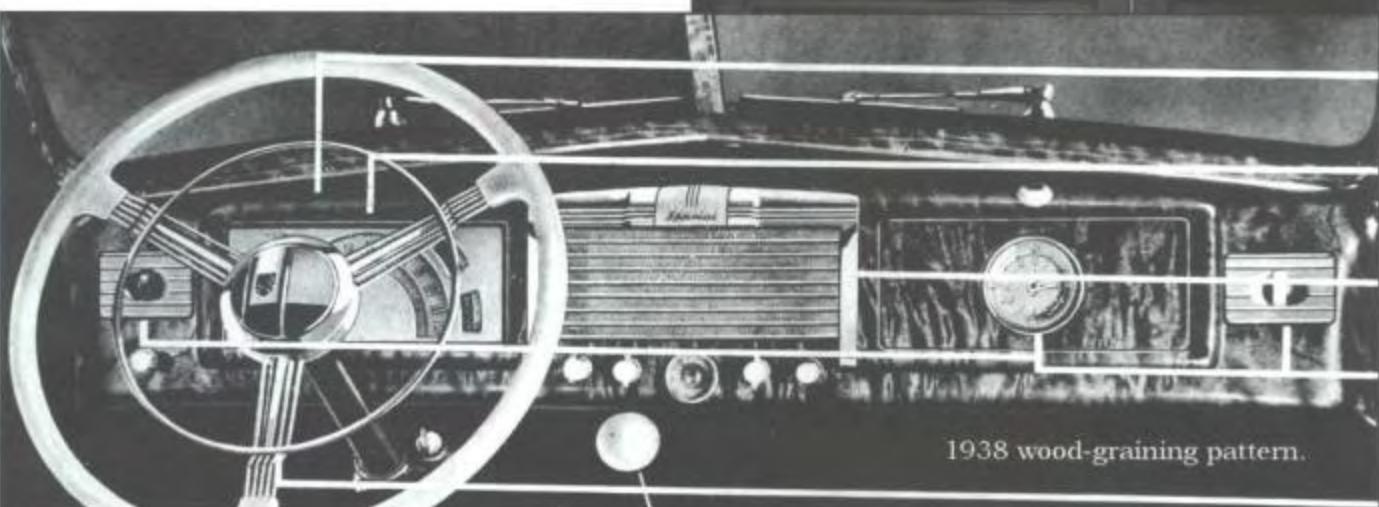
Craig's new wood grain

whole thing white. Then back to the bead blasters. I do touch-ups, too. But there's one thing for sure: you've got to trust the way I do it. One member came in, and I didn't trust his primer that he used from a spray can. So I told him, "if I do all this work with the crappy primer job, and it's all chipping off, I can guarantee what I do, but what you do underneath, I can't guarantee. So if it chips off, that's your problem. And its worth putting in the extra bucks." ■

Contact Info:

FAUXREAL  
WOODGRAINING.  
Oakland, CA

510-839-6809



1938 wood-graining pattern.

# Banner Year for Buick

By Joel Prescott

Reprinted by permission from Old Cars, Dec. 31, 1998

## What place in Buick lore does the 1938 model year fulfill?

Most collectors celebrate the years 1938 and 1941 as Buick's stellar prewar model runs. In his book *Seventy Years of Buick* George Damman goes so far as to say that the '38s are the "undisputed kings of the Buick line among antique car buffs." Such hyperbole aside, there is a high degree of design felicity about the 1938 Buick. The basic package was a carryover of the successful 1937 car, but the modest refinements, such as pinstriped, steel-disc wheels with gorgeous, scalloped hubcaps, and fewer horizontals in the bolder, more refined grille, resulted in an automobile of astonishing balance and grace.

To begin with, the big Buick Dynaflash Eight (which first made its appearance under

Harlow Curtice's\* guidance in 1936) was improved. The division's exclusive new "Turbulator" (i.e., domed) pistons allowed higher compression ratios and more usable power without higher fuel consumption for the Special (248 cid) and 141 hp (320 cid). For all other series the bore, stroke and displacement were unchanged from 1937. This wonderful engine will stand as a minor engineering plateau for General Motors.

Indeed, the new Buick was advanced in many ways beyond styling. New four-wheel coil springs replaced stiffer leaf springs and improved the already fine ride for which the marque was known. (The all-coil configuration had been an industry first for Buick.)

## "Better buy Buick!"

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*Buick admirers say:*

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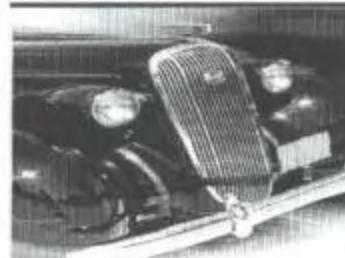
Comfort was further enhanced by oversized, heavy-duty Delco shock absorbers, double-acting in front and directly in the rear. The rear axle was redesigned with vastly improved bearings, correcting a well-documented weakness experienced in the 1937 cars.

The news was not all good. Another "improvement" for 1938 was the self-shifting transmission, optional only in the entry-level Special series. A version of this unit had appeared in 1937 as Oldsmobile's famed "Automatic Safety Transmission." Layout was defined by first and second gear in low range and third and direct-drive in the high. But the device was not really refined enough for Buick's strong torque tube driveline, and the incidence of breakdown was discouragingly high. Just three thousand Specials received the option in 1938, and by year's end many of those dissatisfied owners had paid dealers to retrofit standard transmissions. Buick would not venture into automatic motoring again until the landmark Dynaflo of 1948.

Paradoxically, the 1938's design success was validated by the division's plunging sales figures for the year. Curtice had been appointed president and general manager of Buick in October, 1933, and immediately set about reversing the division's stodgy image. The first full-year model run over which he was able to exercise total control was the 1936, and the Buicks from that year, designed by

the legendary Harley Earl, were unmistakably pivotal. Buick produced 179,533 cars in 1936, earning 4.9 percent share of the domestic market. For 1937, market penetration rose to 5.8 percent, with 227,038 cars coming off the line.

Then, something funny happened on the way to a record. The year 1938 was soft for the whole industry, with a whopping 49 percent total production decline. Buick production slumped to 173,905 cars, but the marque's all-important market share rose to an incredible 8.7 percent. When times got tough, Buick got tougher. ■



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# THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF VACUUM TESTING



## TECHNICAL TIPS

### Vacuum Testing: A Lost Art

Once upon a time, the vacuum gauge was a staple in every mechanic's toolbox and commonly was available at any store selling automotive tools. With the advent of computers and fuel injection, vacuum gauges have been consigned to history's dustbin. This instrument may be an antique, like the old cars we enjoy; yet, it remains a valuable tool for any carbureted vehicle. It can be used to diagnose a variety of engine conditions, assess the operation of vacuum-powered accessories, and assist with engine tune-ups. This column introduces the vacuum gauge to those new to the hobby, and to refresh the memories for the rest of you of its value.

### Vacuum basics

A vacuum results when an enclosed space is lacking all matter, including air. This condition seldom exists, especially in automobiles, where a par-

tial vacuum is created. However, by custom, this partial vacuum is always spoken of as a "vacuum." Vacuum is measured in inches of mercury because the reference measurement is determined by a manometer, a U-shaped tube filled with mercury. At sea level, atmospheric pressure will support a column of mercury in the manometer approximately 30 inches high. Since a partial vacuum is less than atmospheric pressure, it operates to reduce the level of the mercury in the manometer. By custom, vacuum measurements are always referred to simply as "inches," with no mention of mercury or the fact that the measurement is a negative since it is a reduction in pressure.

A vacuum gauge, as pictured in Figure 1, replaces the cumbersome manometer for use in automotive testing. However, this gauge has been calibrated with a manometer to measure vacuum in inches of mercury and reports that reading on the round gauge face with values ranging from 0 to 30 inches.

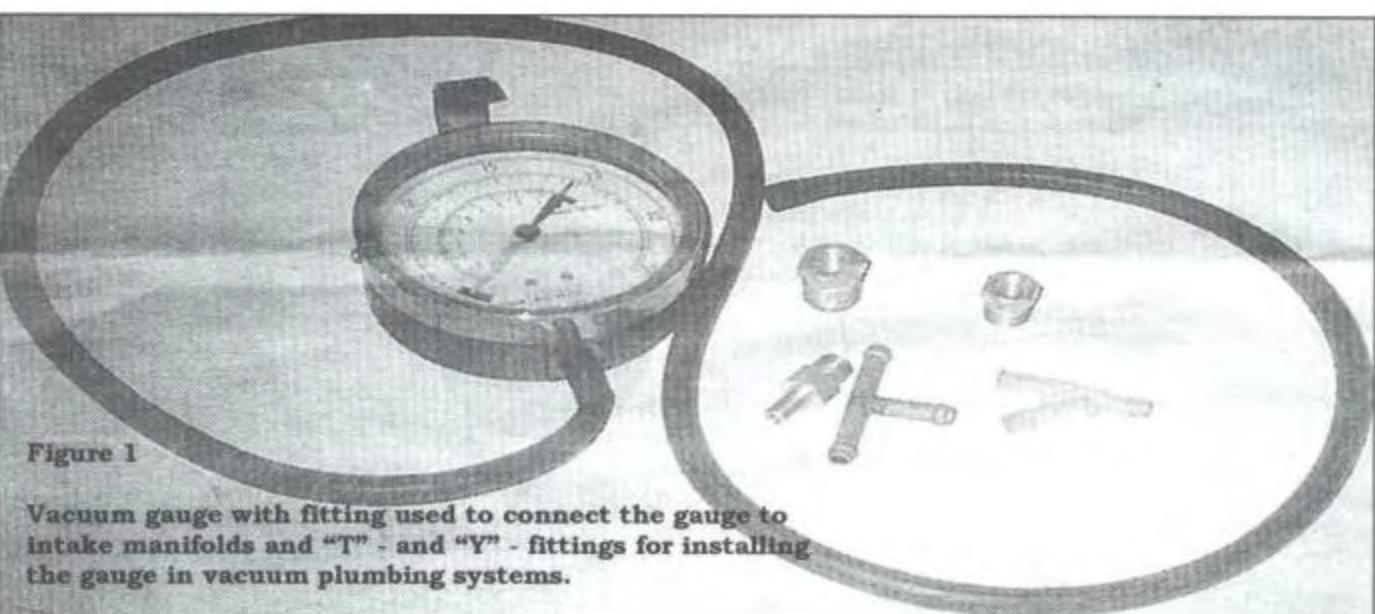


Figure 1

Vacuum gauge with fitting used to connect the gauge to intake manifolds and "T" - and "Y" - fittings for installing the gauge in vacuum plumbing systems.

## Vacuum in Cars

Carbureted engines develop a vacuum on the intake stroke because the cylinder volume increases faster than it can be supplied with the air/fuel mixture through the carburetor. At idle, a properly operating engine will develop 16 to 22 inches of vacuum. When the engine is rapidly accelerated from idle, the wide-open carburetor butterflies combine with the initial low engine speed to drop the vacuum reading to nearly zero. As the engine speed increases, the carburetor (and intake passages) once again are unable to keep up with the cylinder column of the faster turning engine, and so the vacuum recurs.

Recalling the basics previously described, it can be deduced that increasing elevation will decrease vacuum. As a rule of thumb, 1,000 feet of increase in elevation from sea level reduces a vacuum gauge's reading by about one inch. Weather conditions and changing barometric pressure also slightly affect vacuum gauge readings.

However, for engines, the more important factor affecting vacuum is the camshaft profile. The higher the lift, the lower the normal vacuum will be. This is because the higher lift allows a larger quantity of air/fuel mixture to enter the cylinder intake stroke. Similarly, valve overlap also affects vacuum. The greater the overlap, the less vacuum generated. Piston stroke also affects engine vacuum, but to a lesser degree than the camshaft profile—longer stroke, more vacuum; shorter stroke, less vacuum.

A second source of vacuum in certain carbureted cars is a vacuum pump integrated with the fuel pump. Such vacuum/fuel pump combinations were common in cars from the late 1930s to the mid-1950s. These units came about to ensure a steady supply of vacuum to power windshield wipers when engine vacuum dropped during acceleration. Once 12-volt electrical systems were introduced providing

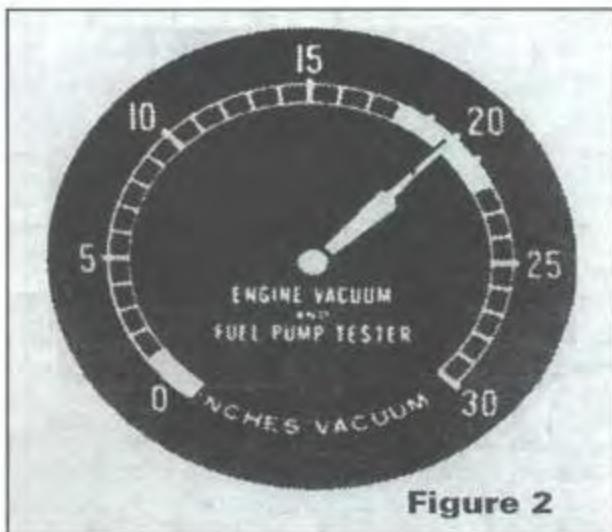


Figure 2

ample electrical power, windshield wipers were converted to electrical power and the vacuum pump was no longer needed. Although vacuum continued to power many accessories, the demand was small and reservoirs were used to supplement engine vacuum if necessary; e.g., to operate trunk latches when the engine was off, or to power air conditioning controls.

### Diagnosing With a Vacuum Gauge

To use a vacuum gauge it must be connected to measure manifold vacuum. Most intake manifolds have a tapped port into which a fitting can be screwed, enabling a connection of a rubber hose connected to the vacuum gauge. If the manifold does not have such a port, the vacuum gauge can be connected to a nipple on the carburetor. However, in this instance, it is important that the carburetor port to which the gauge is connected be below the carburetor throttle plate(s). Those above the throttle plates will not have any vacuum at idle.

To examine engine performance only, the vacuum lines leading to vacuum-powered accessories must be disconnected and their ports tightly plugged. On the other hand, to assess the entire system, the gauge then should be connected in the vacuum plumbing system using a T- or a Y-fitting (see Figure 1).

Before beginning any diagnosis, it is important that the engine be warmed to normal operating temperature, and idling at the specified idle speed. Figures 2 and 3 show normal operating conditions. In Figure 2, the engine is at idle and the vacuum is in the prescribed range with a steady pointer. Remember, the elevation of the test above sea level and camshaft profile will affect this reading. Figure 3 depicts what the gauge will show when the throttle is rapidly opened (the pointer drops to near zero).

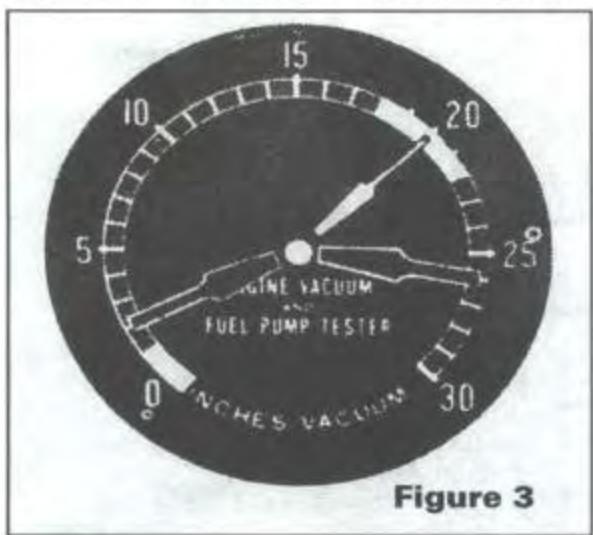
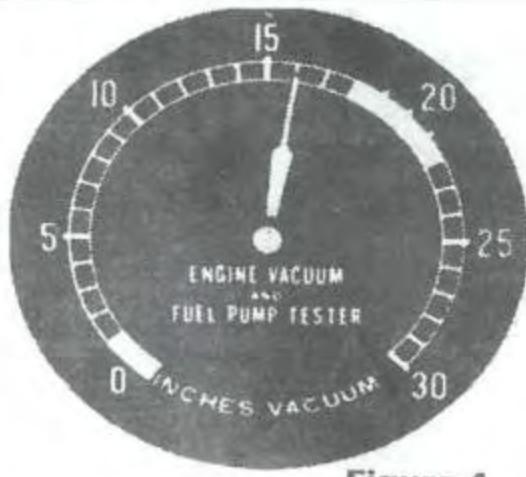


Figure 3

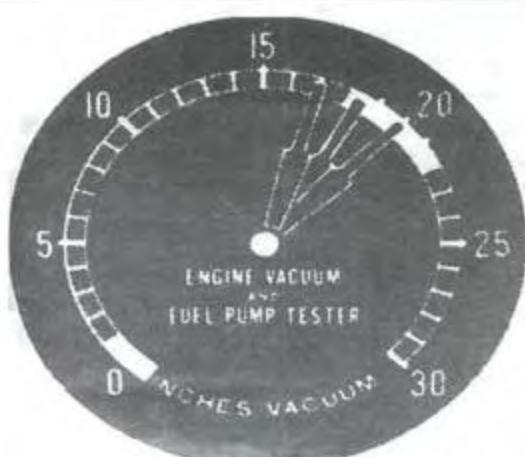


**Figure 4**

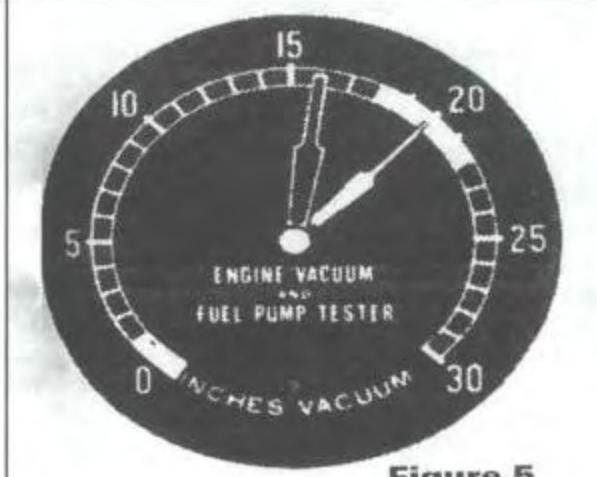
and when it is closed. (The needle rebounds to greater than the normal range.)

Figure 4 shows a low, but steady, reading at idle. This is caused by a problem that affects all cylinders alike. Late ignition timing, late valve timing, and loose tappets can result in reading from 1/4-inch to 2 inches low. Intake system leaks (such as found with warped intake manifold, a leaking manifold gasket, leaky carburetor flange plates, poorly seating intake valves, and leaky intake valve guides) can cause the reading to be from 1/4-inch to 16 inches low depending upon the size of the leak.

If the pointer pulses regularly (see Figure 5), then the trouble is something that affects one particular cylinder consistently, for example, one exhaust valve does not seat, one exhaust tappet is too tight, one valve is sticking, or one spark plug is not firing. The pulses of the pointer will be greater if the problem is one form of leakage (e.g., a burned exhaust valve), than if the cause is a spark plug not firing.



**Figure 6**

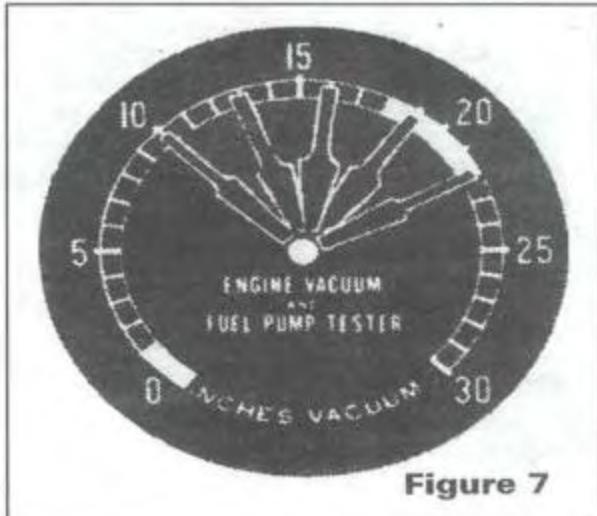


**Figure 5**

An unsteady pointer on the gauge, as shown in Figure 6, can be caused by all those problems listed for a regularly pulsing pointer. However, in this instance, the defects affect more than one cylinder or are occurring irregularly. Other defects that can cause an unsteady pointer are loose (weak) distributor governor springs, rich carburetor mixture, extremely advanced or retarded timing, too-wide spark plug gaps, ignition points not synchronized, or intake valves shifting on their seats.

If the pointer is unsteady and the sweeps of the pointer increase with the engine speed as in Figure 7, the problem is weak or broken valve springs. If the pointer steadies with increasing engine speed, the trouble is in the ignition, faulty distributor weights, or carburetion.

Once the initial diagnosis has been made, troubleshooting begins by addressing those items most easily examined first. For example, check the ignition timing to make sure it is correctly adjusted and then take another vacuum gauge reading.

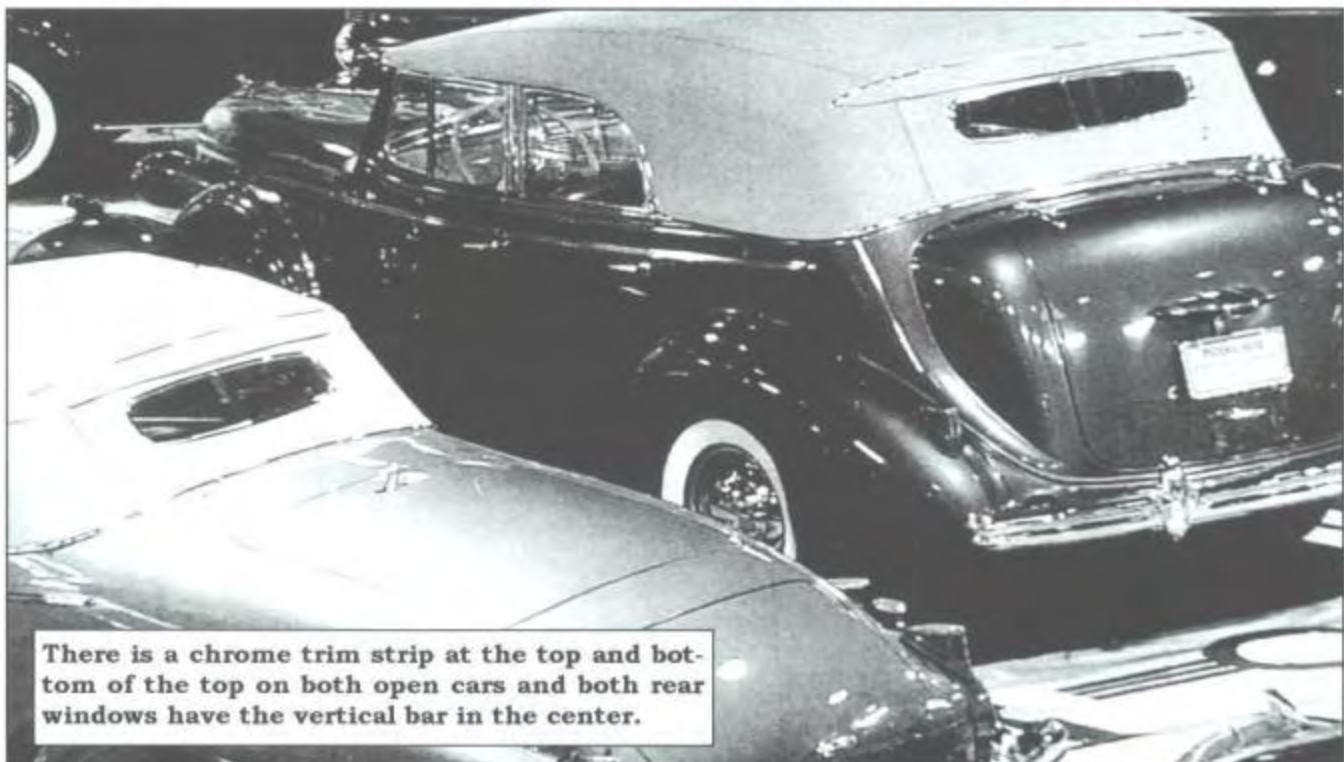


**Figure 7**

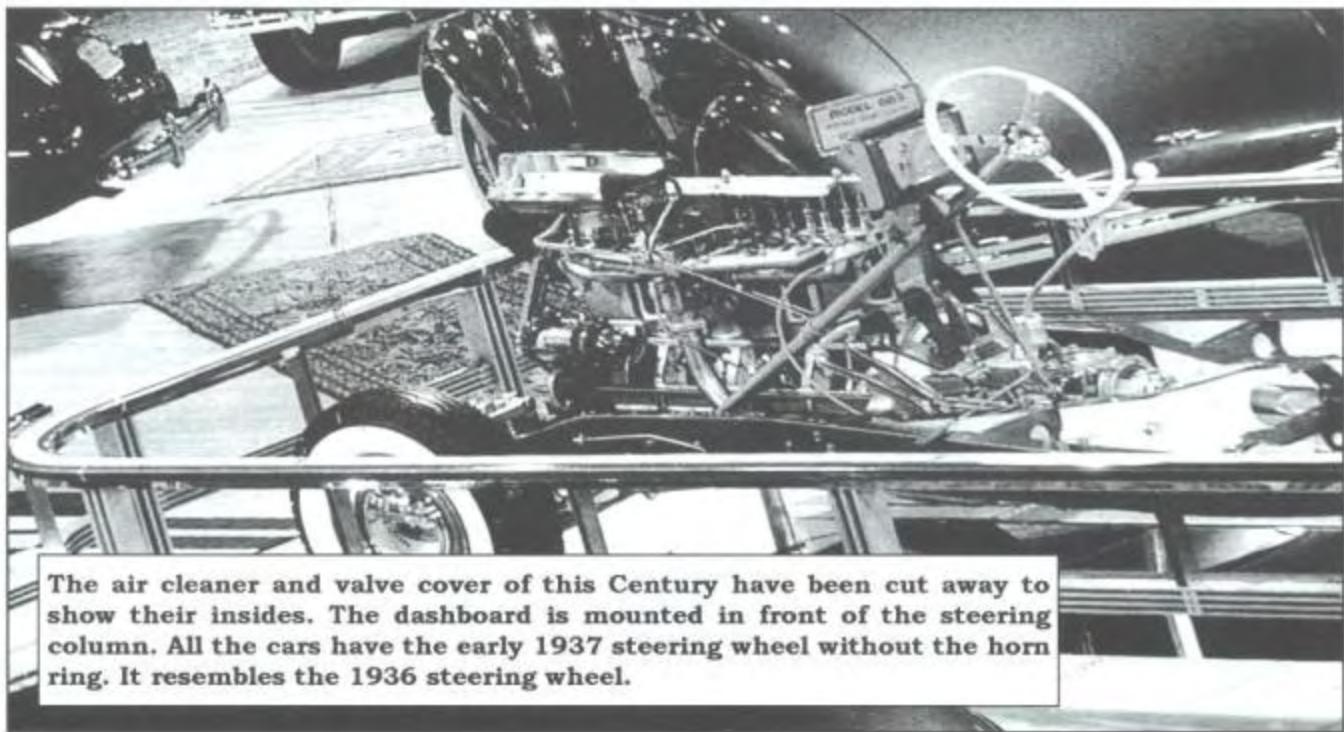
# 1937 Car Show

By Harry Logan (#651)

Here are some photos of a car show in 1937. These photos are a great reference for those of you that have convertibles.



There is a chrome trim strip at the top and bottom of the top on both open cars and both rear windows have the vertical bar in the center.

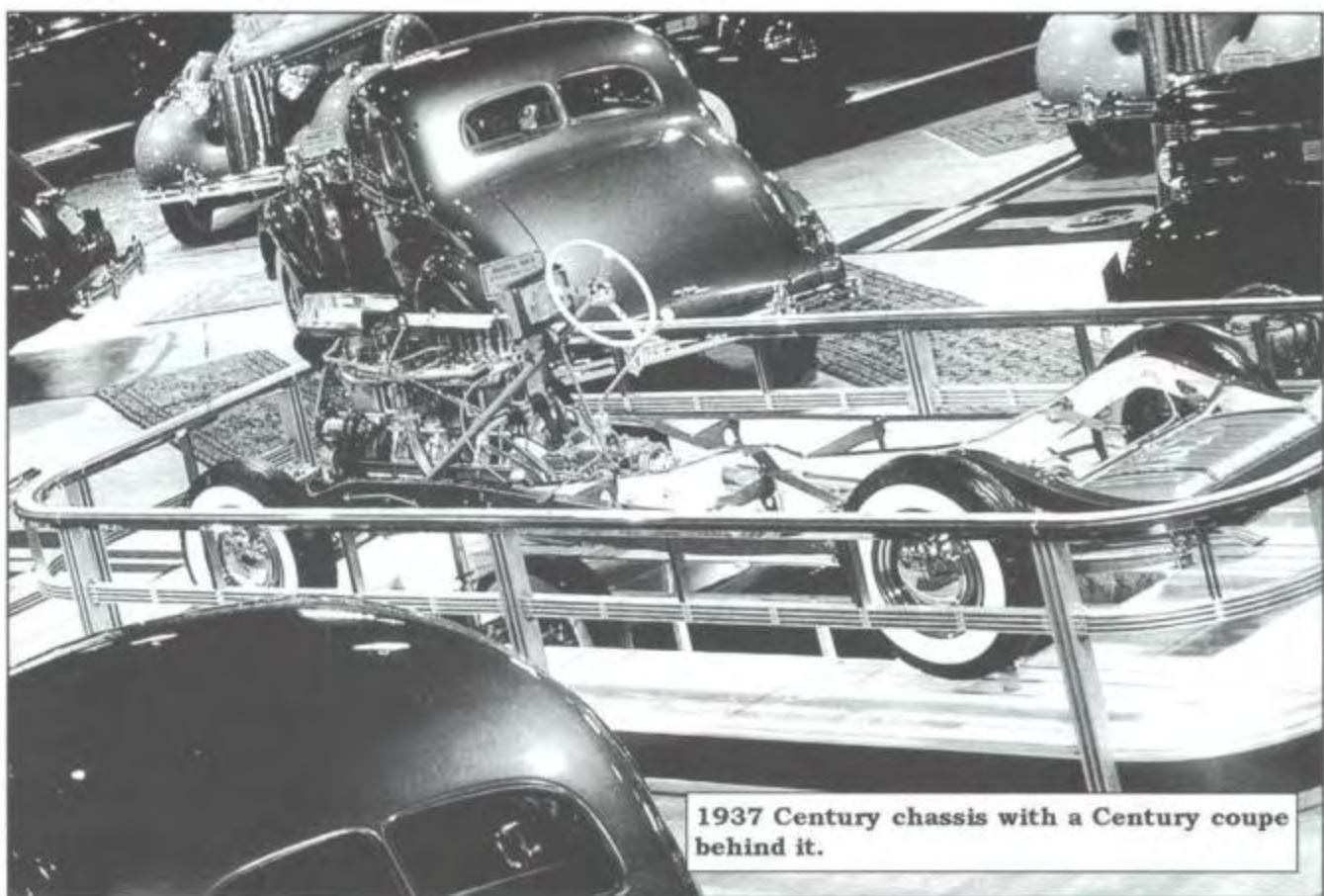


The air cleaner and valve cover of this Century have been cut away to show their insides. The dashboard is mounted in front of the steering column. All the cars have the early 1937 steering wheel without the horn ring. It resembles the 1936 steering wheel.

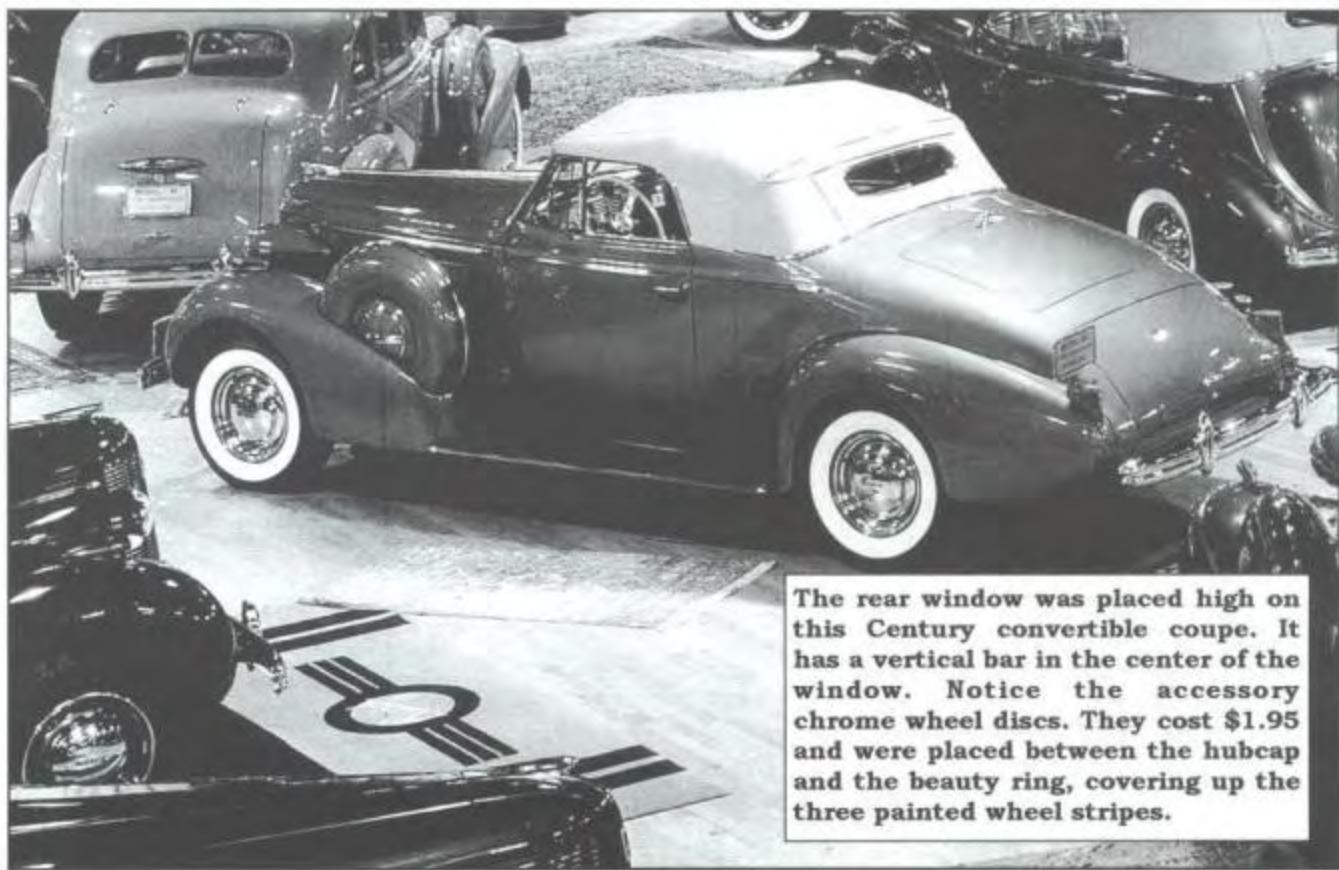


This photo of a 1937 Buick car show was purchased at a local antique store. All the car's license plates had a paper with the model number on it. The slant back sedan in the foreground is a Special Model 47. Notice the chassis with engine and that the whitewalls were on both sides of the tire.





1937 Century chassis with a Century coupe behind it.



The rear window was placed high on this Century convertible coupe. It has a vertical bar in the center of the window. Notice the accessory chrome wheel discs. They cost \$1.95 and were placed between the hubcap and the beauty ring, covering up the three painted wheel stripes.

## REMOVING 1937 HUBCAPS



By Jerry Baton (#281)

## TECHNICAL TIPS

Photo by Mark Jordan (#1297)

In reference to the technical tips in the September/October Torque Tube on removing hubcaps: There seems to be a number of methods to removing them without chipping the paint on the wheels. The version mentioned in the last issue seems to work fine, but I think my way is much better, because you don't need a helper or blanket to catch the hubcap.

My way (with thanks to the suggestion by fellow member Dorsey Helm (#699), is to use a suction cup employed by window and windshield professionals. I have a large, six-inch suction cup with a handle.

Simply press it onto the cap and pull. My caps are on very tight and I have to pull very hard and

twist the suction cup at the same time. When the hubcap comes off it stays on the tool. The tool can probably be purchased from any glass replacement shop.



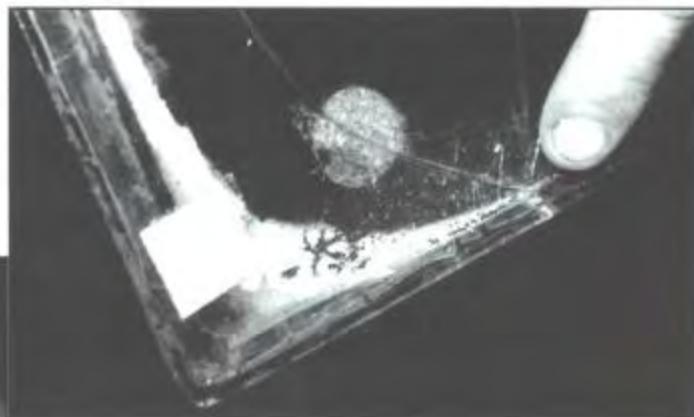
## TECHNICAL TIPS

Story and photos by Mark Jordan (#1297)



## THE MYSTERY CRACK

After looking at many un-restored cars, I noticed that most of the windows in the doors were always cracked down near the bottom. I saw a pattern and wanted to know why because I didn't want this to happen to newly-installed windows in my Buick.



If you look at the photograph to the left you will notice a small screw that holds in the window track. After years of opening and closing the doors this screw has a tendency to inch out and rub up against the window causing it to crack. So make sure that this screw remains tight in all four doors, otherwise you will have to replace your windows again.

# THE WHY OF VAPOR LOCK



## TECHNICAL TIPS

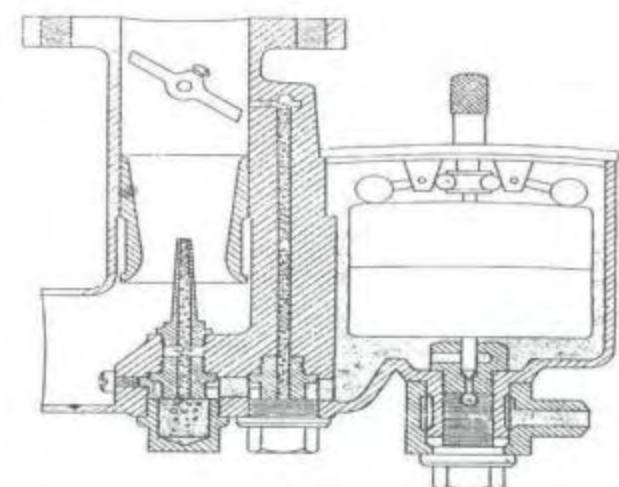
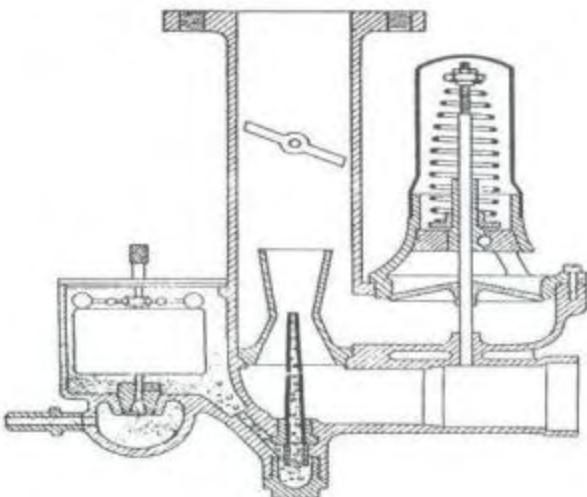
During hot weather, many cars, which run satisfactorily on cool days, are troubled with missing, loss of power and in some cases will stop entirely. This is caused by what is known as vapor lock, which is due to the fuel, or the characteristics of the carburetor and fuel systems.

When too much heat is applied to the fuel, particularly before it reaches the carburetor jet, the fuel will boil and vaporize in the fuel supply system, fuel line, and carburetor bowl. These vapors, in the form of bubbles, interrupt the flow of fuel, resulting in uneven engine running. In extreme cases, the engine will stop entirely, and it is difficult, if not impossible, to start it again until it has cooled. This is what happens with vapor lock.

Vapor lock results in loss of power, since the volume of gasoline vapor is approximately 185 times that of an equal weight of liquid fuel and it is obviously impossible for the carburetor jets to pass enough gasoline vapor to maintain an explosive mixture.

During the last few years, this condition has become more aggravated as gasoline, in general, is slightly more volatile (that is, parts of it vaporize more easily, or at lower temperatures) than before.

*Chart below: When vapor lock occurs in an air valve carburetor, the vapor bubbles, according to one investigator, act as gas lifts, drawing excess fuel through the jet, until the mixture becomes so rich that the engine stalls.*



*Chart above: In a plain tube carburetor, vapor lock is said to result in a lean mixture, as only the vapor bubbles rise in the idling tube until the engine is starved for fuel.*

When this more volatile fuel is used in cars where the fuel line parallels and passes close to the exhaust pipe, or the vacuum tank is placed too close to the exhaust manifold, or the carburetor receives too much heat by conduction from excessive hot-spotting, vapor lock will result.

However, easily vaporized fuel is desirable for easy starting, particularly during winter, but there will also be more likelihood of experiencing vapor lock. Gasoline producers, therefore, have the difficult problem of deciding whether to offer a fuel that will produce easy starting with vapor-locking tendencies, or one that will not cause vapor lock, but instead produce starting difficulties. The result, naturally, is a compromise.

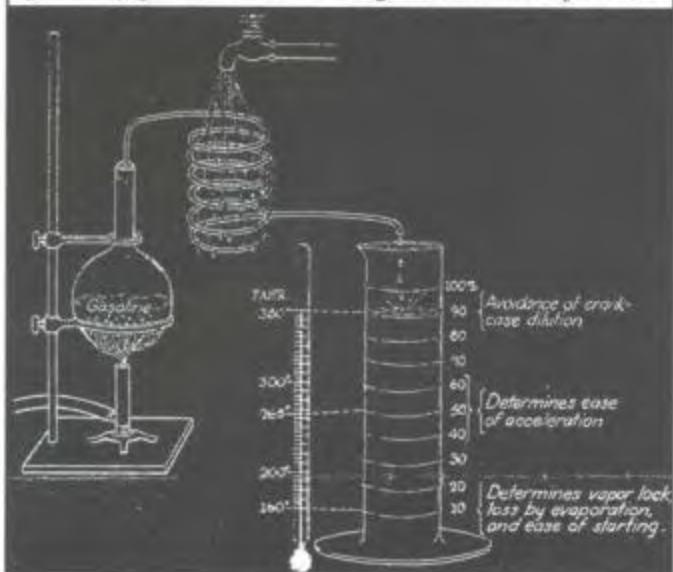
Vapor lock is often very difficult to overcome. Obviously, the first thing that is usually attempted is to change the type of fuel. If this doesn't improve conditions, several other approaches may be tried: Fuel lines can be placed further from the exhaust line; larger fuel lines may be installed; the position of the vacuum tank changed; asbestos may be used as a shield, or wrapped around the tubing and vacuum tank; finally, if possible, the amount of hot-spotting can be reduced.

To have a better understanding of the problem, a more complete knowledge of fuel and fuel-testing procedures is necessary. Gasoline is a mixture of compounds, and its composition varies with the field from which it was obtained, and the manner in which it was refined. As a result, its characteristics also vary and some fuels produce easy starting while others are less likely to produce vapor lock.

The universal method of estimating the volatility of engine fuel is specified by the American Society of Testing Materials. Briefly, the method (crudely shown in the illustration below) consists of heating 100 cu. cm. (6.105 cubic inches) of fuel in a certain size and shape of a glass flask and measuring the various temperatures at which various percentages of the fuel is distilled off into another container. For example, the temperature at which 10 percent of the fuel is distilled off is known as the 10 percent point; the temperature at which 20 percent is distilled off is called the 20 percent point and so on.

Each of these temperature-percent values—or points—has been found to bear a definite relation to certain characteristics of any given fuel. Research has demonstrated that the 10 percent point is the best measure for ease of starting in cold weather, but also indicates the danger of vapor lock. At the high end, the 90 percent point is an index of ease of uniform distribution through the manifolding and also a lack of crankcase dilution

*Graph below: This shows roughly how gasoline is tested for volatility. The temperature at which 10 percent of sample is distilled off (known as the 10 percent point) is a measure of the ease of starting and the tendency toward vapor locking, while the 90 percent point is a measure of the ease of distribution through the manifold and the avoidance of crankcase dilution. The values given are for the average grade of gasoline sold during the summer of 1929.*



in an engine after it is warm. Other intermediate points are of some importance in determining the ease of acceleration. It is these points that are used in specifying fuels. For instance, the Government specifies that at a temperature not lower than 122 degrees Fahrenheit, 10 percent of the fuel should be distilled off. But to insure easy starting, most of the present-day fuels show 10 percent distilled off at a lower temperature.

As previously indicated, if this 10 percent point could be lowered 10 degrees, engines would start more easily. However, under those conditions, about 20 percent of the cars now in use have vapor lock trouble.

Temperatures under the hood often are excessive and often rise above the temperature at which vapor lock is likely to occur. For instance, during some experiments conducted by the University of Michigan, it was found that with the atmospheric temperature at only 89 degrees, the temperature under the hood of one automobile was 230 degrees while the temperature of the carburetor jet was 175 degrees. At these temperatures, vapor lock resulted.

By conducting a series of experiments with a carburetor made of glass, the University of Michigan found that, by heating the carburetor bowl, vapor bubbles would collect on the sides. If the engine were consuming gasoline at a relatively high rate, the bubbles would be swept along and through the jet with very little effect on the operation of the engine. But if the engine were operated more slowly, the bubbles would increase in size until the vapor lock resulted.

In addition to temperature, the atmospheric pressure has a certain effect on vapor locking conditions. As you know, the atmospheric pressure on top of a mountain is less than at sea level, so, consequently, liquids boil at a lower temperature at higher altitudes as the bubbles and steam are more easily formed. In fact, for every thousand feet of elevation the boiling point of gasoline drops about two degrees.

In regard to the performance of different types of equipment under vapor locking conditions, Mr. W. C. Fields of the Standard Oil Development Company, in a paper presented at a meeting of the S.A.E., stated that with plain tube carburetors with separate idling tube and a jet feeding in the above the throttle. That vapor lock resulted in a lean mixture, because vapor bubbles form faster and faster in the idling riser, until nothing but vapor is delivered to the idling jet and so the engine stops. In the case of the air valve carburetor, the vapor bubble rising in the jet (the outlet of which is but slightly above the fuel level) act as gas lifts, pumping the fuel out of the jet until a too-rich mixture is supplied and the engine stalls.

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**Mark Jordan: 415-203-4180—[torquetube3738@yahoo.com](mailto:torquetube3738@yahoo.com)**  
**[www.torquetube.com](http://www.torquetube.com)**

# PARTS FOR SALE

1937 grille shell in very good condition, \$500

1937 grille set, needs re-chroming, \$200

1938 grille shell in very good condition, \$500

1938 front fenders, excellent condition, \$500-\$1,000 Pr.

1938 grille, left half, good condition, \$150

1938 Special hood, vg condition, \$100

1938 Special hood side panels, vg condition, \$100 set

1938 deck lid, good condition, \$100

1937-38 doors, many, what do you need? \$100 ea.

1937-38 bumpers vg. condition, \$100 ea.

Misc. heads for both series engines, \$95

Small series engines, \$100-\$300.

Lots of '37-'38 parts. All prices plus S & H.

**Call for your needs**

**Lloyd Ikerd (#1612)**

**949-640-8200**

**[elzfargo@msn.com](mailto:elzfargo@msn.com)**

Buick Bonery parting out 1937 & 1938 Buicks. Many parts available. Please call for full listing.

**Ken Schmidt (#1805)**

**6970 Stamper Way,**

**Sacramento, CA 95828**

**Phone: 916-381-5271**

**Fax: 916-381-0702**

**[buickbonery@webtv.net](mailto:buickbonery@webtv.net)**

1937 Buick Roadmaster 81 4dr Sedan Fenders, nose sheet metal, grille, doors, trunk lid, frame, etc. Call or e-mail me with needs.

**Jim Garrett (#1826)**

**Hollis, Maine**

**[207-929-8035 patjim@sacoriver.net](mailto:patjim@sacoriver.net)**

1937 Roadmaster Century 320 cu in. engine. Rebuilt new pistons, insert rods, all new manifold, carburetor, fly wheel, and rebuilt starter. \$1000.00

**Mike Dillard (#1011)**

**530-832-4542**

Sidemount Century fenders left side...\$650.00

2 sidemount fender to frame brackets... \$85.00

Sidemount lock and key... \$60.00

Sidemount cup restored in black paint...\$30.00

Photos available

**Ted Taylor (#792)**

**619-470-0302**

1937 Roadmaster sedan passenger side front fender-nice shape, one minor crease...\$125.00

One gas cap, nice condition...\$5.00

Bumper guard needs rechrome ...\$7.00

Voltage regular n.o.r.s. criterion brand in original box...\$35.00

Please add 15% for shipping

**Lewis Cohen (#584)**

**58 North Racebrook Rd.**

**Woodbridge, CT 06525**

'38 grille good condition, \$225.00 for pair.

New '38 pistons .040 oversize, \$175.00.

One set of insert-type rods for the big engine, \$200.00.

One set of insert-type rods for the small engine, \$175.00.

'37 & '38 master cylinder cores for Special, \$25.00 each.

Shipping extra.

**Bob Pipkin (#76) 503-363-4712**

**[bcpip@mailstation.com](mailto:bcpip@mailstation.com)**

**FOR SALE-1937 SPECIAL PARTS**

Starter (734Z) with solenoid \$35  
Generator (918G) needs rebuild \$35  
Shocks (pair/front) VG \$125  
Shocks (pair/rear) VG \$125  
Trunk emblem (complete) \$25  
Distributor (663Y) \$25  
Oil pump \$25  
Battery cover \$15  
Front spindles (pair/exc) \$100  
Grill (left/NOSR) REPRO (in original box) \$100  
Regulator (tested and painted) EXC \$50  
Taillight lenses and bezels (pair) \$35  
Ashtray (front) \$10  
Ashtray (rear) complete VG \$25  
Water pump (good core) \$20  
Sunvisor Chrome bracket (left) VG \$20  
Defroster/heater motors 6v (new/repro)(2)  
\$15 each/\$25 pair  
Heater/defroster switch (taupe) after market \$10  
Engine splash pans (pair) VG \$50  
1937 shop manual VG \$35  
1937 radio manual (repro) \$5

**N.O.S. 1937-1938 Buick Parts****1937**

Front lower motor mount...\$15.00  
40 ser. 2nd speed gear...\$45.00  
40 ser. main drive gear...\$45.00  
40, 60 ser. differential bevel side gears...\$20.00 ea.  
40, 60 ser. locking door handle, 1st type w/offset  
shank...\$30.00 ea.  
40 ser. steering gear pitman arm \$30.00

**1938**

40 ser. clutch release rod adjustment nut...\$4.00  
License plate lamp lens...\$4.00  
Temperature gauge assembly...\$100.00  
80, 90 ser. pitman arm...\$30.00  
Right taillight door, used...\$10.00  
80, 90 ser. differential side gear bevel thrust washers...\$3.00 ea.  
40, 60 ser. outer tie rod ends, n.o.r.s...\$20.00 ea.

**1937-1938**

40, 60 left front shock absorber...\$125.00  
40 ser. transmission 2nd and 3rd speed shifter  
yoke...\$15.00  
40 ser. transmission reverse idler gear thrust washers...\$3.00 ea.

1937 Paint Chip sets (Dupont, Sherman Williams)  
VG plus Xerox copies  
of Acme, Murphy and RM \$35/b.o.  
Taillight lenses (pair) \$25  
Trunk emblem glass "BUICK" (red) VG \$15  
Trunk emblem glass license plate lenses (clear) \$10  
Interior door handle set (includes 4 door handles, 4  
large window cranks and 2 wing window cranks) G  
\$10 each or \$75 for set of 10  
New 50 cp bulbs (headlights) pair \$15  
New 50 cp bulbs (driving lights) pair \$15  
32 cp headlight bulbs \$5 each  
32 cp driving lights bulbs \$5 each

Having sold my '37 Special, I have many parts that  
are not listed. Call-maybe I can help you out.

**Jerry Root (#422)**  
**71 South Pollard Drive,**  
**Fulton, New York 13069**  
**315-598-2319**  
**buickboy@twcny.rr.com**

40, 60 ser. pinion bearing locknut...\$3.00  
40 ser. intake, exhaust valves, specify...\$8.00 ea.  
Rear-axle pinion-bearing lock screw...\$1.00  
40, 60 pitman shaft bushings...\$15.00 pair  
Headlight dimmer switch, n.o.r.s...\$10.00  
80 ser. outer front wheel bearing...\$25.00 ea.  
40, 60 ser. intermediate steering arm bearing kit,  
n.o.r.s...\$30.00 ea.  
Outside door handles, used. 3", 3 5/16" shafts, 4  
15/16", 5 1/4", 5 1/2" tall,...\$10.00 ea.  
40, 60 ser. left steering knuckle with bushings...  
\$40.00  
40, 60 lower outer pivot pin kit, n.o.r.s...\$25.00 ea.  
Ignition point set...\$7.00 ea.

All parts n.o.s. except as noted. Add 15%,  
\$3.50 min. postage

**Bob Graves (#1136)**  
**21 Ferry Rd.**  
**Salisbury, MA 01952**  
**978-463-0715**

# PARTS WANTED

1937 Buick Roadmaster series 80: need N.O.S. or reproduction front suspension and steering parts or information on where I can buy them for the 80 series.

**Jack Maples (#1019)** 402-792-2548  
13000 South 68<sup>th</sup> St,  
Roca, NE 68430

Two top hood sections for a '38 Century  
**Malcolm Fischer (#1746)**  
403-742-1663  
sandguys@telus.net

1937 Century Convertible Coupe (series 66C):  
- Sunvisors - mount to front header of convertible top.  
- Stainless moldings for running boards  
- Stainless moldings for sidemount tread covers  
- Correct inside rear view mirror  
- "Split-type" rear window frame (in convertible top)  
- Rear extension piece for rumble seat gutter-left side

Also: Digital photographs or similar images showing:  
- Correct upholstery pattern for leather front seat  
- Correct upholstery pattern for rumble seat  
- All aspects of interior behind front seat, including rumble seat area  
- Front floor area surrounding pedals

**Jon Kanas (#1732)**  
303-225-7437  
kanas@qadas.com

1 trunk deck emblem  
1 steel brace that goes under the rear fender to hold on to the taillight  
2 long bolts for headlamp bucket adjustment  
2 brackets that hold the bolts (pictures attached)  
Exhaust system original hangers

**Fred Muscavitch (#1560)** 920-490-3735

1937-40 Phaeton front seat adjustment mechanism, tracks and all.

**George Cooper (#1774)**  
4305 Woodlark Dr. Annandale, VA 22003  
703-280-1442  
508-255-3736 (summer and fall)

Two cupped plates used to hold wheels to side mount brackets on a '38 Century

**John Mullenix (#436)**  
1212 S Michigan Ave Hastings MI  
269 945 5807  
rsilverado@cablespeed.com

Rumble seat and lid top header panel moldings. Hubcaps. Side mount wheel covers

**Jack, e-mail:** jaf1938@cableone.net

Centerline radio book, original or copy is fine, for a 1937 special.

**Jerry Pagano (#961)**  
609-748-2462

1937 Grille in good condition  
**Phil Hicks (#1799)**  
707-994-9650

1938 Buick  
Rubber on my running boards or replacement running boards

Rubber seals for the rear windows  
Rubber gaskets for the fender running lights  
**Jon Gibson (#1561)**  
**Jon Gibson Company**  
Ph: 530-672-9900 Ext. 19

1938 Special front bumper center accessory badge "Buick 8"  
1938 Radio-good complete condition  
Rear deck lid emblem "Buick"

**Art Fensod (#1758)**  
357 Country Lane  
Loudon, TN 37774  
865-408-0525

38 66C brake drums.

**Walter E. Smith**  
410-765-6702  
we.smith@ngc.com

### 1937-1938 Parts for Sale

'37 repro, silkscreen glass speedometer, radio and clock...\$100.00  
New '38 Century Stainless "hood hinge"...\$175.00  
S/M Badges - Buick...\$65.00  
'38 Century hood sides, left and right...\$150.00  
'38 Century hood, left side only...\$75.00  
'38 Century hood sides, left and right...\$150.00  
'38 Century hood side, right only...\$50.00  
'38 Century hood side vent, right and left...\$75.00  
'38 Century hood stainless...\$75.00  
'38 Century hood lock mechanism...\$50.00  
Large series fuel pump - rebuilt...\$75.00  
'38 Special hood, right and left, with hinge...\$150.00  
'38 Special hood sides, right and left...\$150.00

### 1936 Buick Special Coupe Completely Rebuilt Engine

2 Transmissions  
4 Mounted Tires with tubes  
2 Radiators  
Complete Nose and Grill, with hood and side panels  
Original Rubber Floor Mat  
Set of 2 Door Handles, inside and outside.  
New Set of Outside Rear-View Mirrors.  
New Original Exhaust Tips  
2 Bumpers.  
4 New Hubcaps '36 or '37.  
1 New Hood Ornament.  
2 Original Fog Lights.  
2 Original Tail Lights.  
2 Original Head-Light Glass Lenses.  
Set of All Original Glass Windows/Windshield.  
Original Steering Wheel and Column.  
2 Original Clocks.  
Original Chrome Wheel Trim Rings.  
2 Original Dime Lights.  
4 Original Parking Lights.  
Original Side Hood Vent Pieces.  
Original Vent Windows with Frames and Glass.  
Chrome Turn Signal Unit (After-Market).  
Original Gas Tank.  
1 Pr. Running Boards.

**Jerry Maak (#1812) 343 Eastern St. New Haven, CT 06513**

**Phone: 203-468-9880 Cell: 203-687-7649**

**aurhaus@yahoo.com**

Two 16-inch wheels for a 1938 Buick Special.  
Will accept best offer. Good condition, needs to  
be refinished.

**Rick Yost (#1704) 805-374-9093**  
**rednyld@aol.com**

38 Special hood stainless, left and right...120.00  
38 Special tail lights, pair...75.00  
38 Special front suspension, hub to hub...200.00  
Large series dual carb manifold...250.00  
"Y" pipe to create dual exhaust...50.00  
38 repro grill, left and right, cast aluminum...250.00  
38 Special radiator...75.00  
38 heater...50.00

Shipping will be added to all purchased parts and is  
not included in  
price above.

**Rod Phillips (#1644)**

**913-481-6763**

### 1937 Buick Special Coupe

1 Pr. Running Boards, with new rubber covers.  
(Installed on the wrong sides, but easily re-installed  
properly.)  
1 Pr. Head-Light Buckets.  
Original Windshield Wiper Vacuum Motor  
Original 4.40/1 Rear Axle Ring and Pinion Gear  
with Drive Shaft.  
Original 3 Speed Transmission.  
Original Steering Wheel  
Original Dome Light.  
Chrome Turn Signal Unit (After-Market).  
Original Intake and Exhaust Manifolds, with Rebuilt  
Stromberg Carburetor and Linkage, Exhaust Riser  
Valve Works.  
6.50 X 16" Firestone Bias-Ply Tires, in Very Good  
Condition; with tubes.  
(New Set of 4 WWW, with Original Black Spare)  
Original 6-Volt Starter Motor.  
Original 6-Volt Generator.  
Original Split Front Bench Seat, with New Beige  
Cloth and Vinyl Upholstery.  
1 Pr. Original Door Handles, one Locking.  
Original Trunk Handle.

'37 Buick Century fenders, good condition. \$500.00  
plus S & H

If you need any further information, please let me  
know.

**Dick Schnitzer (#1393) 248-685-2829**  
**mschnit354@comcast.net**

# CARS FOR SALE

I inherited a 1937 Buick. However, an unfortunate thing happened; instead of having the Buick in driving condition, the car has been dismantled because it was supposed to be rebuilt; unfortunately, the mechanic is unable to complete the task. The car body still has the wheels on, but all the other parts have been removed—but are completely available. Therefore, I have the body which has the wheels on it and then all the other parts are dismantled but not missing.

Price to be negotiated.

Gilles

Montreal, Quebec, Canada

[mnleblond@hotmail.com](mailto:mnleblond@hotmail.com)

## 1937 46C

Complete restoration on a rust free Montana car. Everything has been rebuilt, restored and repaired to like new. Red color coat—clear coat exterior. Red leather interior, tan hard top. All gauges, including radio have been restored to original condition. Wood grain dash was done by Lauren Matley. Six new Goodyear white wall tires with two in the side mounts. New rubber floor mattes. Everything mechanical has been overhauled, including the engine and transmission with a '37 Century rear end. It cruises at 60-65 mph in comfort. No disappointment here.

See photo.

\$40,000 or trade on a '37 Century Convertible Sedan.

Jerry Barton (#281)  
360-825-5230



# CARS WANTED

1937 or '38 Buick Special or Century convertible sedan with sidemounts, must be complete and original, no rust buckets.

Please send information and pictures to:

Philip J. Kuhn (#1792)

3575 Grand Ave.

Gurnee, IL 60031

Phone: 847-360-1961 Fax: 847-360-1652

Restored 1937 or 1938 Buick Century Convertible Coupe. A correct restoration of a good original car with dual side mounts and a dark color is preferred, but will consider all offers.

Tom Watling

209-668-8064 shop, 209-402-5949 cell

1938 Buick 4-dr.

Gary

[Gu1943@cs.com](mailto:Gu1943@cs.com)

Restored 1937 or 1938 66S. or a 66C

Eugene Levandoski (#1834)

716-366-5023



# 1937 - 1938 BUICK 2005 CALENDAR

\$19.99

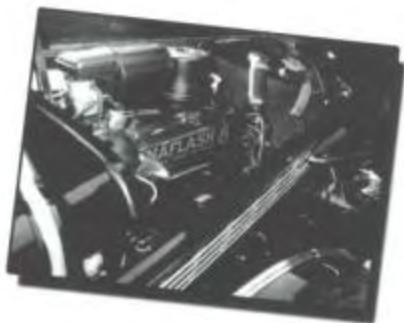
NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE  
AT [WWW.TORQUETUBE.COM](http://WWW.TORQUETUBE.COM)

IF YOU DON'T HAVE INTERNET YOU CAN SEND YOUR ORDER TO:



1937 - 1938 BUICK CLUB  
P.O. BOX 21000  
OAKLAND, CA 94620

PLEASE ADD 15% FOR  
SHIPPING AND HANDLING



# THE 1937-1938 BUICK CLUB STORE



LONG SLEEVE T-SHIRT  
\$24.99



WHITE T-SHIRT \$18.99



GOLF SHIRT  
\$22.99



STICKER (oval) \$4.99



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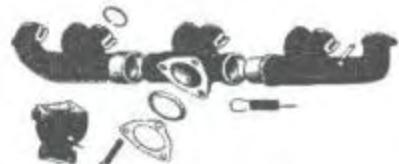
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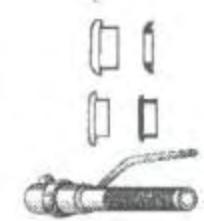
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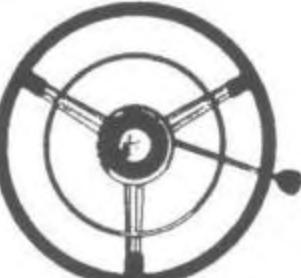
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